

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 6-10 remain pending in the application, with Claim 1 being independent and having been amended herein.

The drawings were objected to as allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In addition, Claims 1-4 and 6-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner questions support in the drawings and the specification for the “guide member”. Without conceding the propriety of this objection and rejection, the recitation of the guide member in Claim 1 has been revised to more closely reflect the original description of the guide at page 8 of the original specification. As noted by the Examiner, that description notes that the process cartridge can be inserted along the guide from an upper portion. Based on this description, one of ordinary skill in the art would conclude that the revised recitation of the guide member is adequately described and supported, and that the specific physical make-up of the guide would be within the skill of an ordinarily-skilled artisan and need not be shown in the drawings. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings and the § 112 rejection are requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 3-84837 (Haneda et al.). Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Haneda et al. in view of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 7-181815 (Kumon et al.). Claim 9 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Haneda et al. in view of Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application No. 3-271754 (Morita et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As is recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to an image forming apparatus comprising an image forming unit, an intermediate transfer member, recording material conveying means, transfer means, a first openable portion, a second openable portion and a guide member. The image forming unit has an image bearing member which is capable of being detachably attached to a main body of the image forming apparatus. The intermediate transfer member is disposed at an upper position relative to the image forming unit to which the image on the image bearing member is transferred. The recording material conveying means conveys a recording material along a conveyance route. The transfer means transfers the image on the intermediate transfer member onto the recording material conveyed by the recording material conveying means. The first openable portion is disposed on a side surface of the main body and is openable to expose the conveyance route. The second openable portion is disposed on an upper face of the main body, is openable independently from the first openable portion, and holds the

intermediate transfer member. The guide member guides the image forming unit inserted from an upper portion of the image forming apparatus through an opening of the upper portion of the image forming apparatus formed by opening the second openable portion.

With the above arrangement, an operator can handle a recovery operation of a jammed sheet from an upper side of the image forming apparatus without interference from the openable side portion of the image forming apparatus.

In Haneda et al., the image forming device includes an upper casing 30, 130 and a lower casing 40, 140. The lower casing includes an openable side panel 140A. An image forming section 10A-10D, 110A-110D is provided in the lower casing. Upper casing 130 is movable relative to lower casing 140. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the image forming unit in the various embodiments of Haneda et al. is withdrawn on the front side of the drawing for the image forming apparatus. Accordingly, Haneda et al. does not disclose or suggest at least guiding an image forming unit inserted from an upper portion of the image forming apparatus through an opening of the upper portion of the image forming apparatus formed by opening a second opening portion, as is recited in independent Claim 1.

Thus, Haneda et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claim.

Kumon et al. and Morita et al. have also been reviewed, but are not believed to remedy the deficiencies of Haneda et al. noted above with respect to the independent claim.

Thus, independent Claim 1 is patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claim 1. Dependent Claims 2-4 and 6-10 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent Claim 1. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicant earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark A. Williamson
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 33,628

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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